

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A nut composition provided with an edible coating, which comprises:

a nut, and

~~at least~~, a layer of coating for said nut that comprises an edible film, said film comprising an edible compound selected from the group formed consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC), acacia gum (GA), maltodextrin (MD), a lipid or a combination of various lipids, and their mixtures.

2. (Currently amended) ~~Nut coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in which said nut is selected from the group formed consisting of hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, peanuts, pistachios, pine nuts, macadamia nuts, pecan nuts, raisins, cocoa beans, cashews, chestnuts, extruded cereals, and soybean derivatives.

3. (Currently amended) ~~Nut coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in whichwherein said nut is either whole or chopped.

4. (Currently amended) ~~Nut coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in whichwherein said edible compound is selected from the group formed consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC) and their mixtures.

5. (Currently amended) ~~Nut coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in which said edible compound comprises a mixture of acacia gum (AG) and maltodextrin (MD).

6. (Currently amended) ~~Nut coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in whichwherein said edible compound comprises a mixture of (i) a cellulose ether selected from amongst the group consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl

cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC) and their mixtures, and (ii) acacia gum (AG).

7. (Currently amended) ~~Nut-coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in which said edible compound comprises a mixture of (i) a cellulose ether selected from ~~amongst the group consisting of~~ hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC) and their mixtures, and (ii) a lipid or a combination of various lipids.

8. (Currently amended) ~~Nut-coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in ~~which~~wherein said edible film further comprises a protein.

9. (Currently amended) ~~Nut-coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, which comprises between 0.05% and 4%, preferably between 0.05 and 2% by weight, expressed in dry weight in relation to the total weight of the nut coated with said edible compound.

10. (Currently amended) ~~Nut-coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, in which the thickness of the coating layer of said nut, which comprises an edible film, ranges from 5 µm to 1 mm, preferably, 10 - 200 µm.

11. (Currently amended) ~~Nut-coated~~The nut composition according to claim 1, which further comprises an additive selected from the group ~~formed~~consisting of plasticizers, antioxidants, functional and/or bioactive or nutraceutical components, colours, aromas, flavour boosters, sweeteners, polishes, and their mixtures.

12. (Currently amended) A ~~procedure~~method for producing a nut coated with an edible coating according to ~~any of the claims 1 to 11~~claim 1, which comprises the ~~stages~~steps of:

- a) applying a filmogenic solution that comprises an edible compound selected from the group ~~formed~~consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxy propyl

cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC), acacia gum (AG), maltodextrin (MD), a lipid or a combination of various lipids, and their mixtures, on the surface of a nut to be coated; and

b) drying the filmogenic solution deposited on the surface of said nut to be coated.

13. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said filmogenic solution comprises andan edible compound selected from amongst the group formed consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC) and their mixtures.

14. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said edible compound comprises a mixture of acacia gum (AG) and maltodextrin (MD).

15. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said edible compound comprises a mixture of (i) cellulose ether selected from amongst the group consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC), and their mixtures, and (ii) acacia gum (AG).

16. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said edible compound comprises a mixture of (i) cellulose ether selected from amongst the group consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC), and their mixtures, and (ii) a lipid or a combination of various lipids.

17. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said filmogenic solution further comprises a protein.

18. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said filmogenic solution comprises one or more edible compounds in a concentration between 1% - 50% by weight.

19. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 18, in whichwherein said filmogenic solution comprises an edible compound selected from the group formed consisting of hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxypropyl cellulose (HPC), methyl cellulose (MC), carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), ethylmethyl cellulose (EMC), and their mixtures, in a concentration between 1% and 20% by weight, preferably, between 2% - 14% by weight.

20. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein said filmogenic solution is applied on the nut to be coated in a rotary drum by dripping or spraying.

21. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein the quantity of edible compound present on the coated nut, expressed in dry weight in relation to the total weight of the coated nut lies between 0.05 and 4% by weight, preferably between 0.05 - 2% by weight.

22. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in whichwherein the drying of said filmogenic solution deposited on said nut to be coated is done with air at a temperature equal to or lower than 200 °C, preferably at a temperature equal to or lower than 110 °C.

23. (Currently amended) Procedure The method according to claim 12, in which the drying of said filmogenic solution deposited on said nut to be coated comprises the addition of a compound in powder form, selected from amongst the group consisting of an edible polysaccharide, an edible lipid, an edible protein, and their mixtures, the same as or different from the edible compounds present in the filmogenic solution.

24. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, in which the drying of said filmogenic solution deposited on said nut to be coated is done in a rotary drum by means of a blower.

25. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, in which the drying of said filmogenic solution deposited on said nut is done in a drying tunnel, air-conditioned chamber, oven or kiln.

26. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, in which the drying of said filmogenic solution deposited on said nut is done in a drying tunnel that comprises the following areas:

- 1) hot air drying;
- 2) infra-red lamp radiation drying; and
- 3) cold air cooling.

27. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, which comprises repeating a variable number of times the stages involved in the application (stage a) and drying (stage b) of the filmogenic solution.

28. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, in which wherein said layers are formed which are the same or different.

29. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, which comprises the inclusion of one or more additives to said filmogenic solution.

30. (Currently amended) ~~Procedure~~ The method according to claim 12, which further comprises the addition of one or more additives to said coated nut.

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31. (Currently amended) A derivative of a nut which comprises a nut coated according to any of claims 1 to 11~~claim 1, or obtainable by means of a procedure according to any of claims 12 to 30, and, furthermore, further comprises~~ an additional coating selected from ~~amongst the group consisting of~~ sugar, honey, salt ~~or~~and chocolate, which covers said coated nut.

32. (New) A derivative of a nut which comprises a nut obtainable by means of the method according to claim 12, and further comprises an additional coating selected from the group consisting of sugar, honey, salt and chocolate, which covers said coated nut.